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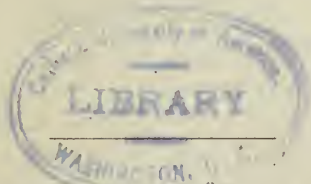


# HISTORY

OF THE

## TOWN OF HOULTON, (MAINE.)

FROM 1804 TO 1883.



BY AN OLD PIONEER.

*G. K. Gilmann*

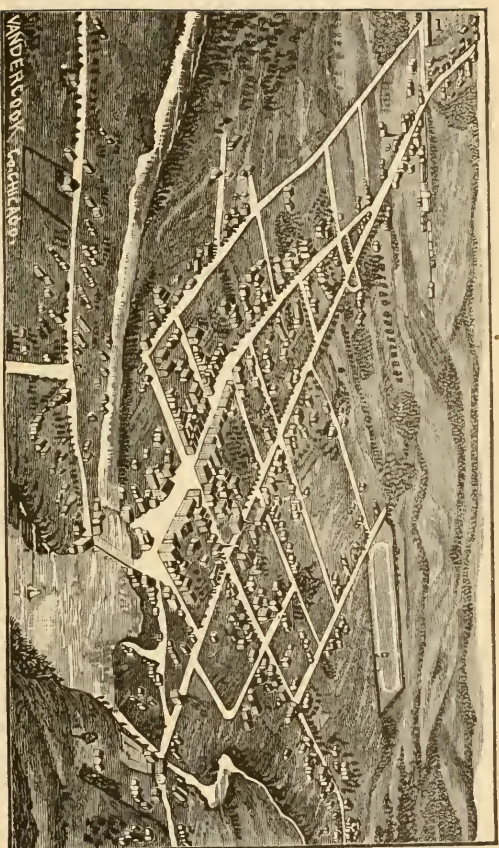
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VIEW OF THE VILLAGE OF HOULTON, MAINE, 1878.

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*Kendall, J.*

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## HISTORY OF HOULTON.



Since of late it has become customary to give the historical account of towns in New England, the writer of the following has, from the novel and extraordinary circumstances under which Houlton was settled, been induced to make a brief statement of facts connected with its rise and progress, for a series of years; and to give a simple, unvarnished statement of facts as they occurred.

As the primitive inhabitants have principally, (as must be expected,) passed from the theatre of action, perhaps there is no one more familiar with the incidents of the early history of that little colony, who would have taken upon himself the trouble and assumed the responsibility of the task, than the writer. The reader must be sensible that the circumstances and events as they occurred, are of such a heterogeneous character, that they must appear, even if judiciously arranged, in a desultory, chaotic state, which would require the gifts and genius of a Kane or a Livingston to embody in a form and phraseology that would endure the criticism of a historian.

In order to give an account of the primitive history of Houlton, and of the original Trustees of New Salem Academy, we must refer the reader to some extracts

from a letter from our venerable friend, the Rev. Alpheus Harding of New Salem, Mass., in reply to a request made for information contained in the records of New Salem Academy; he being familiar with the history of that institution, having been connected with that time-honored school, either as pupil, Assistant, Preceptor, or Trustee, nearly sixty years. Mr. Harding writes:

“In regard to New Salem Academy, I find by the records, it was incorporated Feb. 25, 1795, and the original Trustees named in the act of incorporation, were Rev. Joel Foster of New Salem, Solomon Reed of Petersham, Joseph Blodgett of Greenwich, Joseph Kilburn of Wendell, David Smead, John Goldsbury, Jonathan Warner, David Saxton, Ebenezer Mattoon, Jr., Daniel Bigelow, Martin Kinsley and Ezekiel Kellogg, Esqs., Samuel Kendall, Varney Pearce, and Asa Merriam; that in Oct., 1797, Daniel Bigelow, Varney Pearce, and Rev. Joel Foster were chosen a committee to sell the half township.”

But it appears from the records that in the autumn of 1804 at the annual meeting of the Trustees, Ebenezer Mattoon, Samuel C. Allen, and Samuel Dickinson were chosen a committee to *convey* said lands to the following persons, viz.: Aaron Putnam one-eighth, \$625; Varney Pearce, one eighth, \$625; Joseph Houlton, \$1000; John Putnam, \$500; Joshua Putnam, \$500; Rufus Cows of Amherst, \$500; John Chamberlain, \$500; William Bowman of Hadley, \$250; Consider Hastings, \$250; Thomas Powers of Greenwich, \$250; total, \$5000. Mr. Harding writes, “These lands, being far from any settlement in Maine, at that time were unsalable, and the purchasers being involved and unable to sell these lands, concluded to dispose of their farms in New Salem and remove into the wilderness and make new homes. This deprived New Salem of many worthy and good families, and of its most public citizens.”

In the summer of 1804, Messrs. Joseph Houlton, Aaron Putnam and Oliver Taylor, left New Salem for the province of Maine—came by land to Bangor, where they hired an Indian with his canoe to convey them to the river St. John. They proceeded up the Penobscot to the Mattawamkeag, thence up the Baskahegan stream to the portage of the Schoodic Lake, where the Indian proposed to them that he would describe the way, so they might proceed on their journey without him. Mr. Houlton having passed the same route before, thought from the knowledge he had of the lake and the country, that he could pilot them. The Indian returned and they went on, crossing the lake, but they became bewildered, lost their course, and landed on the east shore, where they rambled off in the wilderness, got lost and were for days without food. They came to a brook, where there were fish, but the desideratum was to catch them. With Yankee ingenuity and invention, impelled by the keen demands of starvation, they took a shirt, tied up the neck and arm-holes, bent a stick in the form of a hoop, which they fastened to the other end of the linen, in the fashion of a dip-net, with which they contrived to outwit the fish, making captives of several trout and suckers, which helped to sustain life. They proceeded without guide or compass, wandering through swamps, climbing over windfalls, camping wherever night found them; exposed to the constant annoyances of the black-flies and mosquitos; thus, wandering in a trackless wild, with naught to rouse them from their dreary solitude, save the discordant croakings of the crow and raven, or the tremulous halloo of the loon, and the screeching of the mimic owl, what must have been their emotions at the first discovery of the foot-prints of civilization, when they finally reached the bank of the St. John, 35 miles below Woodstock. They came to a cottage, the residence of Mr. Harper, and called for food.

The good woman, beholding their sad condition—garments torn, limbs scratched and bruised, from the snags and bushes, their pale, emaciated features, directly prepared some fresh salmon, in a manner as simple and harmless as possible, of which she gave them sparingly, lest they should eat too freely; her husband being absent. Having tarried there until they became restored, by the benevolent and judicious treatment of their kind hostess, they asked for their bill of expense. To which she replied, “We never take pay of strangers.” Mr. O. Taylor, with his accustomed pleasantry, casting an inquiring look around, asked, “Of whom, then, in the name of wonder, do you take pay?” With a mutual blessing and friendly farewell, they pursued their journey up river to Woodstock, from whence they went to view what they called the *promised land*.

After taking a survey of this section of the country, having had a mid-summer view of their anticipated home Messrs. A. Putnam and Taylor were as much pleased with their land and prospects as were their predecessors; and confirmed the favorable report of the first discoverers; probably not aware of the short summers and long cold winters of this high latitude, nor foreseeing the destiny which awaited those pioneers who, for years, were isolated in the heart of this then wild region. But it appears to have been the design of the Creator that this wilderness should, ere long, be converted to the use and benefit of man; that the giant growth of this beautiful forest was to yield to the axe of the woodman, and this desert become a fruitful field.

In the summer of 1805, Mr. Aaron Putnam and family, accompanied by Varney Pearce, Jr., Samuel Houlton, and Luther Tyron, left New Salem for the eastward, as it was then called. They came on board a vessel from Boston to Fredericton, from thence in boats to Woodstock, 60 miles above Fredericton. Mr. Putnam and

family remained at Woodstock while the young men proceeded to what is now called Houlton, and felled the first trees in the place.

The circumstances connected with the settlement of this new colony were indeed novel. What could have induced the inhabitants of New Salem to purchase wild land in the interior of the district of Maine, at a sacrifice of the privileges and enjoyments of churches, schools and society, and embark in such an enterprise—to encounter the privations, perils and hardship of establishing a petty colony in this region of frost and snow, in a latitude of more than 46 degrees, appears to be a problem of mysterious solution.

Capt. Joseph Houlton, wife and eight children, viz: James, Samuel, Joseph and Henry, sons, and Sarah, Polly, Lydia and Louisa, daughters, left New Salem for Houlton Plantation, as it was then styled, in the summer of 1807, and arrived at Woodstock after a safe and speedy passage by water from Boston.

Leaving the daughters at Woodstock, the others, assisted by kind friends, cut a *bridle* path to Houlton, the matron following on horseback, with her china tea-set carefully packed in a basket, hanging on her arm, supported by a pillow,—a very necessary appendage to their outfit—for, after the fatigue of so long a ride, wending their way on a zigzag line, they would require something from that cup which “cheers but not intoxicates.” They came to a thicket of cedar, where they left the horses, and became pedestrians the last two miles, to the long-sought *promised land*.

Joseph Houlton and family, Samuel Cook, Esq., his son-in-law, and James Houlton, who was married the day previous to their leaving New Salem, constituted the first three families of that novel forest home.

The first object, after their arrival, was to obtain fire and food to refresh the weary occupants. After adjusting



the limited supply of kitchen utensils, with the order and neatness of New England housekeeping, they baked their bread without chimney or oven, in a bake-kettle, or "Dutch oven," as it was called, with a cover to it, hung on a pole supported by stumps or crotches, or placed in the corner with coals above and beneath. This was one specimen of their culinary operation by which many barrels of flour have been baked by the first settlers, until they could obtain materials for building. They usually commenced with a small cabin made of spruce logs, locked together at the four corners; the inside hewed off to an even surface. Among the *nobility* they would even make the outside to compare with the inner. The roof consisted of rafters ribbed with small poles, and covered with bark or split cedar; and, until a chimney could be built, a large aperture was left through the roof for the smoke to ascend to its accustomed altitude. The spacious fire-place, large enough to burn small mill-logs, was constructed of stone and clay mortar, up to the mantel-piece; the chimney above was made of cedar sticks, laid up cob-house fashion, and plastered with a thick covering of mortar mixed with oat straw.

But to secure these temporary habitations from the insidious intrusion of Jack Frost, they caulked the crevices between the logs with moss gathered from trees. This was the humble style of log-cabin architecture.

The long winters passed off almost imperceptibly, while they were busily engaged preparing timber and getting materials for building fences, thrashing their grain and cutting firewood, which was no ordinary task, as it was found necessary to keep fires night and day during the severe cold weather.

At the opening of the spring, the first business was to prepare for sugar-making. The troughs for catching the sap were made of the fir-tree, or birch-bark, which

the French and Indians used. The tenth of April was the usual time for tapping the sugar-maple. The iron-ware for boiling the sap, from the size of three barrels down to two gallons, were brought into requisition for three or four weeks, with pipes and puncheons, that were placed in due order near the kettles beside the camp, to hold the sap.

In the morning, on the crust, the boys, with moccasins and snow-shoes, a hand-sled and a deep tub, each with two pails, commenced gathering the sap, which was a laborious but not a *bitter* task, for the saccharine came next, when each, with his spoon and dipper, partook freely of the delicious candy, giving a deep vermillion hue to their glowing countenances.

They made, during the autumn, some improvement by clearing the land for sowing about their cabins, which it was found expedient to do as early as possible in the spring, to secure a mature growth from the destruction of untimely frosts, for the change is sudden from winter to summer, consequently vegetation progresses with rapidity and luxuriance.

In those seasons, wheat and other grains yielded a bountiful harvest. But inconvenience and expense attending the grinding, rendered those crops of comparatively little value, there being no mills nearer than Woodstock; and at times they were obliged to go down the St. John, fifteen or twenty miles below Woodstock, traveling upon snow-shoes and hauling the grain on handsleds. This may appear appalling to the reader, but we state facts as they occurred, which we learn from unquestionable authority. But they were not long subject to this herculean task;—the Yankee ingenuity and versatile talents of Capt. Houlton soon put a hand-mill in operation, which did their grinding, though probably not in all respects *quite* equal to New York manufacture.

The condition of the first settlers must have been gloomy indeed, but for the friendship of their British neighbors ; yes, neighbors—although twelve miles distant, they acted the human part of the good “Samaritan,” in their deeds of kindness and benevolence. Their doors were opened to receive, and their hearts ever ready to welcome them to their hospitable homes, rendering such aid as their necessities required. Their trade and intercourse for years were confined to his Majesty’s subjects, with whom they sustained the most friendly relation.

The pioneers of this infant colony were men of industry and enterprise, who had enjoyed advantages for intelligence beyond the general migratory class, who, when they remove, seldom stop longer than barely to gain a residence and then proceed to make other new improvements for those of more staid habits, of perseverance and energy ; consequently possessing more of wealth, character and influence.

In 1808, Capt. J. Houlton received an appointment to the office of Register of Deeds for the northern district of the County of Washington, by his Excellency’s command, James Sullivan, Esq., Governor and commander-in-chief of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In 1809, Mr. Joshua Putnam and Phineas Stevens left New Salem for Houlton. Mr. Warren Putnam, who had been four years in trade at Woodstock, removed to Houlton with his family, consisting of his wife, mother, and four sons, viz :—Amos S., Jay, Lysander, Aaron and an adopted son, Joseph Goodenough.

Mr. Putnam made a location of rare romantic beauty ; surrounded as it is on the east, south and west by the waters of the Meduxnakeag, the aboriginal name, but which is now familiarly called creek. The north branch empties in on the west, which contributes about one-third to its waters. The elevated bank, which rises rather abruptly, following the creek, upon which Mr. Putnam

built a log house, affords a fine view of the opposite surrounding localities. Here the Indians frequently passed up and down, with their bark canoes deeply laden with their valuables, such as a variety of game, "squaws" and "papooses." Here, too, the wild ducks of various species, played in the rippling current, practicing their newly fledged broods, now diving beneath the limpid element, then on their wings, whizzing through the trackless ether, to seek some new seclusion.

It may appear to some that, at that time, the Province of Maine must have presented some imaginary, as well as real inducements, to the people of New Salem, for their decided predilection and destiny it seems was for Houlton, notwithstanding the tide of New England emigration was to the west.

In May, 1810, Messrs. Varney Pearce, Esq., Deacon Samuel Kendall, Joshua Putnam, Ebenezer Warner, of Springfield, Joshua G. Kendall, Jacob Haskell and Putnam Shaw left New Salem for the Province of Maine. They embarked at Boston, and, after a tedious passage of several weeks, from the ceaseless rocking and pitching of the vessel—being green hands just from the country, they were all distressedly seasick; poor souls, they must have had rather a squally, squirming time of it, for when they landed at the city of St. John, where they tarried a short time, to their chagrin, they found they had lost their center of gravity, so that on attempting at locomotion they reeled, staggered and halted, more like newly yoked pigs, than with the measured pace of *terra firma* pedestrians. Mr. Amos Pearce and Simeon Holden left New Salem a fortnight later than those who came from Boston by water, and after a separation of about five weeks, having traveled some 400 miles by land, they arrived at Woodstock on the same day, which must have been a remarkable coincidence.

During the summer Mr. A. Putnam built a mill-dam

across the creek near his house, as before described. At the western shore it was found difficult to obtain a permanent foundation upon which to build, and at the time of freshet the water undermined and washed away the bank and carried off the dam. In July the house of Mr. Putnam was burned, with the clothing, beds, furniture and provision. The fire caught from a piece of felled trees adjoining, of some 50 acres, which accidentally took fire, and so terrible were the flames that the family fled for refuge to the opposite shore of the creek. Those misfortunes must have been severely felt by Mr. Putnam and family, while they were striving to establish themselves with a new and permanent home; yet Mr. P. endured the losses and privations which he sustained by those potent, antagonistic elements, with that fortitude and forbearance which were characteristic of him.

In the summer of 1811, Doct. Samuel Rice and Joshua Putnam, with their families, accompanied by Samuel Kendall, Jr., and Sarah his sister, removed from New Salem to Houlton, thus adding two families more to this oasis of the forest, there being six, besides other settlers, young unmarried men, viz:—Samuel Houlton, Joshua G. Kendall, Ebenezer Warner and Phineas Stevens. These families were located upon both sides of the road running nearly east and west, within a distance of less than two miles; and all busily engaged, building, clearing away the forest, converting it into a beautiful field. The crops of all kinds of grains and vegetables were abundant. They planted but little corn, but what they raised was of the best quality. Potatoes and rutabaga turnips were raised with facility and in abundance from the newly cleared lands, and they were found to be valuable for rearing stock, fattening beef and pork. These vegetables were of great service, particularly before their improvements were sufficient for producing a

supply of hay. Then potatoes were not subject to rust and rot, as of late, neither was wheat liable to blight or weevil, as now. Their only fears were of untimely frosts. They then raised, from three pecks of seed, more than thirty-three bushels, or at the rate of one hundred bushels from two and one-half bushels of seed, though this was more than an average crop, yet it proves the genial adaptation of the newly cleared lands to the growth of wheat which has until of late, been the staff of bread for the country.

In the autumn, Joseph Houlton, Esq., built a mill-dam, and erected a saw and flour mill beneath the same roof, upon a small stream, which empties into the creek near the village, as it now is, and in the meantime, evenings, they ground at the hand-mill, to furnish bread while building. Mr. A. Putnam rebuilt a dam and erected a mill frame.

While amid their temporal cares and labors, it appears they were not unmindful or indifferent to their spiritual interests. The inhabitants, principally, having remained as sheep without a shepherd, feeling a sense of their destitution without the gospel ministry, were providentially visited by the Rev. Edmund Eastman, Missionary from Limerick, whose services were gratefully received and duly appreciated.

October 13, 1811, a church was embodied in the Plantation of Houlton, by the name of the First Congregational Church, in the Plantation of Houlton.

At the news of the declaration of war between the United States and Great Britain in 1812, of which the inhabitants of Houlton were apprised on the fourth of July, being panic struck, in view of their exposed situation, in the heart of the wilderness, surrounded by savages—on the morning of the fifth, Samuel Haskell, a visitor from New Salem, (who informed the writer,) was dispatched as messenger to Woodstock to consult



some of the principal inhabitants of that place concerning what could be done to secure these defenceless families from insult and plunder by the Meductie tribe of Indians. But before Mr. Haskell reached Woodstock he met three Provincials on the way to Houlton upon a message of amity.

Soon after, George Morehouse, Esq., authorized by the Provincial government, came and informed the people of Houlton that they might remain unmolested as in time of peace, that the arms of the Indians had been secured, and the inhabitants forbidden to sell them ammunition; the government was supplying them with provision. Thus their defence was guaranteed, provided, however, that the citizens of Houlton should neither bear arms, aid nor assist in any military operation or designs against His Majesty's subjects; and in case of any hostile movements on the line or in the vicinity of Houlton, either from the American government or by the Indians, they were forthwith to notify the citizens of New Brunswick thereof.

The above, though not in the phraseology of the original document, yet amounts to the same, as nearly as the writer can learn from verbal testimony.

The first sparse settlers upon the banks of the St. John were fearful of the Indians in both governments; and males from sixteen years of age and upwards, that were able to bear arms, were furnished with them by the government.

In the autumn of 1812, Samuel Wormwood left Alfred, Me., for Houlton—came via Bangor, where he hired an Indian with his bark to pilot him through. They came up the Penobscot river and the Mattawamkeag, where the Indian said he would direct him so as to find the way alone; that it was but a day's travel from there to Houlton. Accordingly the Indian turned back, leaving Mr. Wormwood with but one day's allow-



ance of provision, who started off with a ponderous pack of joiner's tools upon his back, proceeding as nearly as he could by his directions, without guide or compass. On leaving the stream he became bewildered, wandered off, and was seven days in the forest, six of which he subsisted upon the bark and roots he gathered in the woods. This was in October, exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and the long, frosty nights, without fire or shelter, day after day, wandering, forcing his lonely way, frantic from anxiety, grief and despair; no one knows the number of miles he traveled to gain one in the right direction, until he became so much exhausted that he left his pack on a horseback, between a pond and the creek, about seven miles from Houlton, and crawled over the windfalls, followed the stream until he finally reached Houlton almost dead. Dr. Rice, who took him to his own house, found him so feeble that he said, had he not arrived that evening, he must have perished before morning. But with watchful care and skill, allowing some simple liquids for a time, he at length was restored. His clothes were all in tatters—his feet were swollen, lacerated and lame, from his desperate efforts to gain his destination. His meager, emaciated features and skeleton appearance, must have more personified a ghost than a living man. After Mr. W. became restored, Mr. Kendall accompanied him in search for his pack, which they found, and, to their utter astonishment, with some crumbs and dry crusts of bread in the bottom of it. The poor sufferer became so bewildered, as to have lost all recollection of having a morsel of food left, while starving for the want of it. These facts the writer received from Mrs. A. Putnam, the daughter of the subject of the narrative.

In this uncultivated state of the country there were valuable tracts of timberland on both sides of the line, which were attracting the attention of the adventurer to

hazard his fortune in the lumber business, which has too often proved unsuccessful to many poor fellows who have failed irretrievably in that enterprise. Although square pine timber was commanding a high price at St. John and Miramichi, varying from four to seven dollars per ton, and sometimes more for the Norway pine, yet the expense for labor, teams and supplies, was so great as to consume the amount obtained. Hay delivered at the camps cost from \$20 to \$60 per ton, oats and other necessities were in the same proportion; nevertheless this business was destined to become the staple of the country, and created a demand for more labor than this new country could then supply, and this, with the team power which was required to clear off the heavy growth, to the development of the resources of this virgin soil, called for horses and oxen, which were furnished from the counties of Penobscot and Kennebec, by people from Bangor and vicinity, viz: Messrs. Gordon, Holyoke, Dudley, Webster, Bailey, and others, who came through with droves, following up the Penobscot and Mattawamkeag rivers to within some twenty-five miles of Houlton, thence following a spotted line through.

Those drovers made this trade in stock an object of speculation. They not only understood, with Yankee shrewdness how to buy and sell animals, but they soon evinced not a little sagacity in the manner of transporting goods, which they did by fastening packs upon the neck and horns of the oxen, as well as upon the backs of horses, which proved a successful device. Their goods sold at a greater profit than the stock, and doubloons, \$16 pieces, were as common and current as \$5 bills are now.

In 1813, Wm. Williams and his family removed from the Province of New Brunswick to Houlton, and settled in that vicinity, and are esteemed as respectable, enterprising inhabitants.

In the winter Joshua G. Kendall, Samuel Houlton, Plineas Stevens and Jacob Haskell left Houlton for New Salem, with packs of sable fur, which they bought of the Indians. The snow deep and the weather extremely cold, without a guide, save a pocket compass, they took their direction towards the Mattawamkeag, with their heavy packs and eight or ten days' provision, traveling upon snow-shoes, to which they were unaccustomed, climbing over the fallen trees, dodging the snow-loaded branches—their snow-shoes catching the underwood and snags that obstructed their passage, pitching them headfirst—their moccasins losing foothold—cast-bonded, tangled up, and for the loss of locomotive power, thrust down their hands to keep their heads, perchance, some way horizontal with their heels, lest forsooth they should find themselves in rather a sad predicament, with their unwieldy packs wagging them first one way and then the other, in the struggle to right ship and cargo. Thus traveling twenty-five miles to the Mattawamkeag, they were all jaded out, where they sought fuel and camping. Suffering from fatigue and cold,—fingers cramped and fireworks damp,—it was with much effort they obtained fire. Their refuge for lodging was upon the snow, covered with layers of fir boughs and pillows of the same, with a fire of logs, six or eight feet long, and as many inches through, one upon another, with a forestick supported by short cuts for andirons, protected by no shelter but the forest. After partaking of their homely fare, each with his blanket wrapped around him, in real Indian style, they lay themselves down in the fond embrace of Morpheus.

Where they, in the shadowy moonlight slept,  
The sparkling sentinels their vigils kept,  
At early morn their daily task renewed,  
Their journey onward, onward they pursued.

After they arrived at Belfast, they shipped for Boston, whence they soon reached New Salem,

Where sable fur a ready market won,  
For muffs and tippets then were all the ton,  
And those of large dimensions, too, were sought,  
And ladies paid full well for all they bought.

The writer well recollects the facetious account they gave of their rude effort upon snow-shoes, and their traveling down the Mattawamkeag and Penobscot rivers on the ice, of crossing the track of some wonderful wild animal, where the creature leaped more than twenty feet at a bound. If, while we relate this fact, we can divest ourselves of the possibility of its reaching the magnitude of a "fish story," we must suppose that the wilds of the Penobscot were once the home of the panther.

The inhabitants of Houlton, retaining the Puritan character, duly estimating the advantages of early mental culture, procured a room for a school, in the house of Joseph Houlton, Esq., and employed Samuel Kendall, Jr., for their teacher.

September 7, 1814, Dea. Samuel Kendall and family left New Salem for Houlton, accompanied by Edwin Townsend. It being in time of war, we came by land, with wagons to Bangor. On our passage, in many places, we met families removing from Maine, in wagons, drawn by four and six oxen, plodding their way patiently along, where their heavy-loaded teams had beaten the roads, in many sections, to one common bed of mortar; all bound for Ohio. Many of them disposed of their property at great sacrifice, leaving their now fertile lands and comfortable homes, venturing their all upon the hazardous enterprise, without even previously making a location. So great was the rush then for Ohio, that the taverns were crowded with emigrants, who on inquiry learning that we were bound for the eastward, their attention

was at once arrested, and the interrogatories to which we were subjected, were marshaled with the scrutiny of an inquisition. They exclaimed to us, "You are wrong—what! going into the wilds of the interior of Maine? the very jumping off place of all creation!" After listening to their unqualified salutations, we must confess we felt some twitching qualms of conscience that our father did not accept the offer of his nephew, James Prentiss of Boston, who said he would give him all the land himself and sons would improve in the State of Kentucky, if he would remove there; but in the Providence of God, our destiny was in Aroostook. However, not long after those families whom we met, reached their destination in Ohio, we were credibly informed that many were attacked with the fever, and sighed for the salubrious air of New England; yea, would have been glad had they never left Maine.

But to pursue our journey, we sold our horses and wagons at Bangor, where we arrived ten days after it was besieged by the British. The vessels then being built were burnt on the stocks, the buildings here and there were perforated with grape-shot and shattered, the academy windows broken, and the place, though but a village, presented the habiliments of mourning. The children, as if unconscious of their devastated homes, were at play in the streets with the cannon balls.

At Old Town, twelve miles above Bangor, we hired seven men, five of whom were Indians, with bark canoes, to convey the family and goods, accompanied by Messrs. Marshall and Butterfield, making nine loaded canoes, all bound for the River St. John. We had what might be called a social time. Camping out nights was a novel thing to us, and an Indian we had never seen before; and they were rather frolicsome, though we gave them no stimulant to excite them. They were joking and singing with the playfulness and innocence of children.

Young Peeopold, of about 18 years, gave a specimen of the Indian dance, shaking his shot-horn and singing in a varied, guttural tone, el-ba-took, took-take-take-moha, repeating their (to us unmeaning) monosyllables, hopping up and down, alternating on each foot, his body inclining forward, with projecting elbows, which gave him a most ludicrous appearance, until from this monotonous gambling, he became exhausted, then he would close his fandango with hue-cha! on a high key-note.

Old Mattannis was a brawny, clear-blooded Aboriginal who, though not so much of a comedian, yet sustained his part to admiration, while the other Indians appeared equally to enjoy the comic repast. Peeopold was distinguished for vivacity, intrepidity, symmetry of form and manly beauty. He came in the same bark with the writer, and we believe the history of the same Peeopold has recently been published, whose life, if carried out as commenced, must prove a fit subject for a romance. On the first night after leaving Old Town, we stopped at the house of Samuel Wheeler, who received us kindly. Our lodging consisted of a field bed, which covered the floor, and somewhat crowded at that. In the morning we pushed our heavy laden barks up the smooth water of the Penobscot, taking our lunch at 12 o'clock, before a fire which the Indians made for boiling the tea; we were soon under way with our pilot ahead, with sturdy hands our paddles measured with equal pace, until the sun cast the long shadow of the superb elm from the island to the shore, which warned us to prepare for the night; when we arrived at Mr. A. Haynes', whose sequestered cabin stood a few rods from the river, as we ascended its western bank, where we were cordially received. After an early breakfast we left our hospitable friends, who were the uppermost settlers on the river, and worked our way a day's journey onward, where on the eastern bank we landed our frail craft, and made our



bed of boughs before a crackling fire, by which we, with keen appetite, partook of our simple fare, and lay down, particularly bidding adieu to surrounding objects, Somnus presiding over our motley group until the day star rose, when with eager haste we prepared our frugal meal, of which we all ate with thankful hearts, and loading our canoes, we resumed our onward course. After a fatiguing day, forcing our way against a strong current, we arrived at what was called Gordon's Falls, on the Mattawamkeag, where we stopped for the night, under an old roof, the rafters of which stood on the ground; expecting to find more *ample* accommodations than where we had no shelter, save the forest and the broad blue canopy of heaven; but to our utter disappointment, we were annoyed all night with myriads of insects, which, for the time being, were as bad, or worse than the ten plagues of Egypt. The next morning, after a sleepless, and, I might say *restless* night, we *poked* our way along, following the meanderings of the Mattawamkeag, every now and then losing our whereabouts, from the perpetual windings of the dead waters, but were delighted with the beauty of the surrounding scenery, in the stillness of a clear October moonlight; the elm here and there, with its bending top, though recently shorn of its foliage, still appeared as if planted by the hand of art; and the banks elevated to secure the table-lands from freshet tide, with shrubbery enough to give it the appearance of a tastefully cultivated garden; where the autumnal leaf in its golden hue, carpeted the spongy surface, and fringed the alluvial shore. From the Mattawamkeag we came to the Baskahegan, where at the falls we caught a supply of the largest, fattest trout we ever saw. Whence we followed the stream to the portage at the Schoodic Lake, where we tarried for the night. It being late, Old Mattannis went astray, and it was quite dark before he found the company. Being asked what he would



have done had he not found the camp, he said, "Oh, spoze me starve three days, then, eatum sable," as if by that time nothing would come amiss. In the morning, having carried our canoes and baggage to the western shore, we launched our *flotilla* in the waters of the limpid lake, which then, to us inlanders, appeared rather oceanic. In the afternoon we encountered a squall that beat against our frail bark, occasionally dashing over the gunwale upon us; at times we feared the boats would fill and sink with their valuable freight, but we ventured to follow our pilot, one after another in true Indian file. It is astonishing to see with what dexterity the Indians control their canoes, propelling them so steadily and safely against the surging waves, and the whirling, foaming current. From the lake we passed down Eel river to the carrying place, as it is called, to the St. John, where we were obliged to lug all our baggage four or five miles, dodging along the windings of a bridle path. After six weeks journeying through the country, up the rivers and over lakes, we arrived at Houlton, happy to see our old friends and neighbors, who met us with affectionate salutations. Truly thankful were we to Him who guided our footsteps and led us gently through this laborious, perilous journey, and safely landed us at our long-sought, anticipated home.

In autumn, James U. Taylor and family removed from the Province of New Brunswick to Houlton. In the winter following Messrs. Carr and Carle, from Kennebec, came to Houlton and built a flour-mill at the dam of A. Putnam. Mr. Carr was a millwright and vocalist, who taught school evenings, and was patronized by the youth and adults. A primary school for the common branches was taught by Samuel Kendall, Jr., in an apartment of a large house built by Dr. S. Rice. Messrs. Reed and Tilton of Kennebec, came to Houlton where, for six months, they manufactured scythe

snaths, fitting the irons to the wood, for which they found a ready market at Houlton, and in the Province, at \$1.50 per stick.

In the summer of 1815 Joshua Putnam, 2d, a proprietor of Houlton, and Edmund Cone, came from New Salem to reside at Houlton. At this time, with the exception of three families, the inhabitants of Houlton consisted principally of Houltons and Putnams; if not all of those names, they were connected by marriage. Dea. S. Kendall and Dr. S. Rice married sisters, the daughters of Joshua Putnam, Sr., who, with two brothers, Amos and Ziel, were among the primitive inhabitants of New Salem, and whose native place was Danvers, Mass.

Here, for want of dates we depart from chronological order. Samuel Cook, Esq., married Sally Houlton; Ebenezer Warner married Polly Houlton; Isaac Smith of the Province of New Brunswick, married Lydia Houlton; Jesse Thompson of New Salem, married Louisa, daughter of Joseph and Sarah Houlton; James Houlton married Sally Haskell of New Salem; Samuel Houlton married Sarah Kendall; Joseph Houlton, Jr., married Elmira Ray; Amos Putnam married Priscilla Wormwood; Stillman J. Putnam married Betsey Broad; Ly-sander Putnam married widow Ruth Fall; Aaron Putnam, Jr., married Maria Burleigh. From these and other kindred marriages, descended a numerous offspring, to the second and third generation, who at this day constitute a considerable portion of the inhabitants of Houlton, though some have, as must be expected, removed to other States and territories, scattered from Minnesota to Australia, which is but a miniature of the common lot of Adam's posterity; marrying and intermingling in social alliance, as if to fulfill the destined mission of disseminating light and knowledge universal, which amicable intercourse is a prominent feature of the long-prophe-sied millennium.

In 1816 the British and American Commissioners, Beauchet, Campbell, Johnson and Turner, with some sixty men, came to survey the boundary line between Maine and the Province of New Brunswick, according to the treaty of 1783, commencing at the monument at the source of the St. Croix, running the line due north to the highlands which separate the waters that flow into the Atlantic, from those that empty into the St. Lawrence. Having run the line some fifty miles from the monument to Mars Hill, cutting an avenue sixteen feet in width, twenty miles of the distance, the British commissioners, Messrs. Beauchet and Campbell, contended for Mars Hill as the said highlands, but Messrs. Johnson & Turner non-concurred with them. They erected a temporary observatory on Parks Hill, on the east line of Houlton, where, with their theodolites and instruments, they measured distances and altitudes. The men were equipped with axes, knives, canteens and knapsacks well stored. Houlton being their place of rendezvous, having an excellent violinist and the choicest liquors, which at that time seemed indispensable to festive entertainments, they occasionally met the citizens of Houlton in friendly, social pastime, whose kind attentions were reciprocated with cordial salutations by our limited circle.

A young Indian invited a youth of Houlton to accompany him on a hunting expedition. The young man, pleased with this son of the forest, accepted the invitation, delighted as he was with the prospect of such a novel excursion; with spirits buoyant with the anticipation of inexperienced youth, on a beautiful September morning started off, with his Indian friend, for the hunt, with the entire equipage for the outfit, with gun, hatchets, knives, blankets, and provision. After a hard day's tramp, with packs nearly as weighty as themselves, they came to a stream which, for a distance was still water,

where they found it expedient to procure some water craft to proceed. Finding it difficult to construct a raft which they could propel up-stream, and far from the growth of the birch, the bark of which canoes were made, the next morning, after a night's lodging upon the bank, listening to the music of the owls and mosquitos, with which, however, the Indian, too familiar, lost no sleep, they found a large spruce which they felled, and with Indian application and skill, peeled off the bark some fifteen feet in length, which, with cedar splits and spruce roots for thread, they constructed a *thing* which carried them over the smooth and rough waters to the hunting ground. Before they reached this place their miniature ark became leaky, from the shoal places over which they hauled it, and their only remedy was to bail it out with a dipper, which was no desirable pastime, while hunted by the flies and mosquitos. In fact, this inexperienced youth, whose fair complexion and tender skin was a rare bait for those bloodthirsty legions to feast upon, was probably not aware that while on this anticipated tour of pleasure, he would be game for such a pestilential swarm of *insignificants* which neither give or ask for quarter.

While paddling their rough, shapeless bark over the still water which, mirror-like reflected the varied colors of the trestled foliage, pendent from the bending tops, which marked the irregular windings of the stream, they proceeded slowly and stealthily, lest they should frighten the game, both on the land and water; for the Indian was so expert with the gun that he would shoot game on the land, ducks on the wing or the water, while upon his seat in that ticklish spruce.

The manner of taking the beaver is with the utmost cunning and caution. They set and fasten the traps under water, near their only ingress and egress to their houses. While setting them they are careful not to speak

a word, except to whisper, lest they be heard, and be as expeditious as possible, lest they be seen; and where they have trodden or handled anything they wash or wet with water, to prevent their scenting them, for if they discover any marks of the approach of man to their houses, they forsake them at once. Beavers separate in families by pairs, leaving the homestead for new and favorable locations, for if they remain together until they become numerous and crowded families, they, like certain bipeds, grow churlish and quarrelsome, and not unfrequently leave marks of violence which they inflict upon each other. Upon separating for new homes they seek places where, by building a dam, they can flow a large surface for their sphere of operations and security; building their houses of sticks, (the bark of which is their food,) about a foot long, and from one to five inches through, which they lay in a mixture of mud and grass; the Indians say their masonry is done with their wide, flat tails. When their houses are finished, being of various sizes, they resemble the form of a haycock. The inside is divided into upper and lower apartments, in order to suit the convenience of those amphibious animals at high or low water, always making their entrance under water, for safety from the approach of enemies above.

Their flesh is excellent, when well prepared, but they are seldom taken in a manner to bleed them properly; they are so exceedingly shy, they are rarely caught excepting in steel traps, which are so fastened as to drown them. When in the winter the Indians find their dams, they cut holes and drain off the water. Finding their dams broken they venture out nights by families, on the ice, to seek an asylum from the marauders. The Indians, anticipating their removal, lie in ambush for them, but when thus assaulted they often prove desperate antagonists, for if some are shot dead, others finding they can

make no escape, will turn upon their pursuers, and as there are generally a family or more together, they fight a bloody battle. The Indians get badly wounded when they slip and fall on the ice, as they sometimes do in their encounter, for their broad, incisive teeth cut wherever they take hold. Those that were taken in this manner and well bled, the Indians sometimes brought to Houlton, where they found a ready market. The tail of a large, fat beaver is esteemed a luxury for an epicure.

Sometimes they found families consisting of large and small beavers; after catching the old ones they would break their houses and take the little ones, bring them to Houlton and give them to boys to domesticate and sport with; but the poor captives made such ado and pined so for their dams, that the owners were glad to release and trust them to their native element.

But to return to our juvenile hunters who, for several days, traveled the forest in pursuit of various kinds of game, trapping the beaver, which was their principal object, then left for home, pretty well bled by the flies, and not a little fatigued from the jaunt, but proud of the trophies of their chase.

The gnats, or, as the Indians call them, all-feel-em no-see-ems, black flies and mosquitos, were a sore annoyance to the first settlers, during the summer months. They were obliged to make smokes in their door-yards, two or three hours before night to drive them from their houses and secure repose and sleep. The woodman, while felling the trees, prepared cedar-bark smoke, in the form of a cigar, about two feet long, fastened to their hats, lighted at one end, which served as a portable defense against them. At dry times, when dangerous to carry fire, they used fresh butter where most exposed to their bites; the Indians applied bear's oil, which, though offensive, was allowed the best protection. The



large horse-flies were so troublesome that it was not safe to leave horses fastened so that they could not defend themselves, except in the shade or stable. In pastures where there was no shelter, people put up temporary coverings to shield them from the heat of the sun, but left open to the circulation of the air on every side.

During the heat of summer, the horses, cattle and sheep would feed in the cool of the morning, then flee to those shades where they would remain till four or five o'clock P. M. It was found expedient to make smoke for the poor dumb beasts, to which they would flee, as if by instinct, where they had no other protection from those troublesome insects.

It is said there is nothing made in vain, but to finite man many things appear quite irreconcilable,—yes, to poor microscopic man, of few and evil days, of complicate mechanism, a miracle to himself, doomed to death, yet indestructible, naturally depraved, meeting in his fellow his co-equal foe; prone to doubt his divine origin, and, paradoxical to say, at war with his own constituent elements.

In 1816 the series of cold seasons commenced, when, it was said, spots were discovered on the sun's disk. Those frosty summers reduced the inhabitants to severe privations. At Houlton it even snowed in June. The birds sought shelter wherever they could, but many died of the cold. Wheat and other crops, except rye, were cut off by untimely frosts—potatoes were but half grown,—wheat, our principal staff for bread, was so badly smitten as to produce an unsavory odor to the olfactory nerves, instead of ripening to the accustomed golden harvest, and proving more than a remuneration for the labor of falling and clearing of the forest. These were trying times,—yea, enough to produce despondence upon the spirits of the most resolute and stout-hearted; but kind Providence, ever mindful of His dependent creatures,



did not leave us to perish with hunger. The creek, which now wears the same channel and winds its way, dividing the village, then abounded with salmon, that were easily caught, (of which we shall say more hereafter,) and partridges were numerous and tame as domestic fowls, and very good. The wild ducks, though shy, were frequent captives of the hunter; and the sugar maple, with which the forest abounds, contributed not a little to our comfort and support, and yielded an ample supply of sap, from which was made syrup, candy and sugar of a pure, refined quality, being wholesome, nutritive and delicious. Cows that had no pasture, save the woods, which furnished a supply of Solomon's seal and adder tongue during the summer months, gave a pail of milk at night and morning, from which were made one pound of butter per day, and of good quality.

When rye flour sold at Woodstock for \$17 per barrel, the inhabitants were obliged to adopt a simple regimen, changing new milk to curd, mixing it with cream and sugar, which was both nutritious and palatable, a good substitute for custard. During the hard times, lumbering, however delusive, absorbed the capital and controlled the enterprise of the people of the country. Eighteen inch shingles were three dollars per thousand, boards ten and twelve dollars per thousand, and hewed ton timber found competition at a high price. From the signal failure of crops, the farmers, as an alternative, changed their occupation for a time, and became lumbermen, consequently their farms were neglected.

Boards and shingles were run in rafts to Woodstock and Fredericton, which were their principal places of market. Ten miles below Houlton there are falls where they unrafted, carrying the lumber some fifty rods or more over a rough path, dodging the trees, bouncing against the roots and rocks. This Herculean labor was

necessarily performed in the spring and autumn during the time of a freshet.

An incident connected with this hazardous enterprise, we think is here deserving a place. In November, a young man and a boy of some 12 years started for Woodstock on a raft of shingles. Being unaccustomed to rafting and running shingles, when they arrived at the falls, they barely escaped going over, which, under such circumstances, must have proved inevitable destruction, but with their utmost effort they landed the raft. The next morning, having lugged their shingles over the portage and rafted again, they pushed off for Woodstock; they had gone but a short distance before they ran upon a sand-bar, which tore the raft all to pieces, the shingles floating at random—driven by wind and current. Catching the ax, poles and packs, they put for the shore. Having made a raft of cedar, they floated down to Woodstock, where they procured provision, a bark canoe and a bottle of Jamaica, without which, in those days, it would have been thought presumption, exposed to the cold storms of November, to endure the fatigue and hardship of raftmen. The next morning those green hands, with their poles and paddles, worked their passage up some five miles, the water freezing to the poles, and the ballast light, so that a misstep would upset the ticklish bark; the current in many places deep and strong, dashing alternately from shore to shore, in their haste to reach the falls, the boy at the bow, whose pole slipped from the ledgy bottom, falling on the gunwale it capsized instantly, precipitating them both head foremost into the cold stream of some eight or ten feet of water; the poor boy swam for life to the nearest shore, but the ledges were so bluff, it was impossible, for some distance, to get foot-hold. The other, with the locomotive power of his legs and one hand, while with the other he righted the canoe, securing the parapherna-

lia of poles, paddles, and baggage, with great effort swam to the shore some thirty rods below. Resuming their places, with the greatest exertion to keep from freezing, they pushed their treacherous bark three or four miles, when they upset precisely as before, having to clear for the shore where best they could. Well for them that they were expert swimmers, otherwise they must have drowned. Being soaking wet and nine miles from inhabitants, fireworks, baggage, blankets all saturated, and the little fellow, in his desperate effort to reach the shore, lost off one shoe, it being more than half a mile to their place of camping, provision entirely wet, and, to cap the climax, the bottle sunken, they were in a quandary about what to do, but finally they resolved to make another effort to gain the falls; if they could find no fire there to walk the shore till morning to keep from freezing to death, rather than abandon the raft and return to Woodstock without accomplishing their object. Proceeding with caution, they at last reached the falls, with clothes stiff with frost, cold hands and limbs and heavy hearts, but soon, to their infinite joy, they discovered a blazing fire, a man having arrived there that day and made provision for the night. Their blankets dripping wet, and no covering but the canopy of Heaven there was consequently no sleep for them. Placing themselves before a good fire, turning round and round, smoking and steaming like old-fashioned basted turkeys, until morning, when doubtless they, with drooping heads, through the "keen demands of appetite," partook of their water-soaked fare, after which they proceeded to the task of collecting their fragmentary raft. Having succeeded and marketed the shingles at Woodstock, they slung their packs, which were blankets tied at the extreme corners, containing various articles, to the amount of some thirty or forty pounds, and trudged home, where they told the sad story, which.

though pitiful, yet extorted laughter from the facetious guests, who, listening to the rehearsals of the duckings they had, their desperate swimming efforts in the freezing element, the loss of shoe and bottle, though not like honest Gilpin, who broke both of his with loss of hat and wig, exclaimed, "Such fellows were not reared in the woods to be frightened at an owl or to quail before a storm."

In the autumn Mr. Amos Putnam took a horse on a raft of boards, to haul them by the falls. After they arrived, having hauled the lumber, at night the horse was turned to water, but suddenly disappeared. Search was made, but without success. In the morning, they renewed the search, but without success as before. The animal being young and valuable, Mr. Putnam employed several men, who were a week in pursuit of him, but finally gave up the creature for lost.

On the 12th of February following, there were men with teams passing down the creek, upon the ice, who discovered the track of a horse, which they followed a short distance and found the poor brute alive in the woods, but reduced to a mere skeleton. This creature had been from fall till Feb., suffering from the storms of rain and snow, limited at last to a narrow beat of a few rods, that he kept open by browsing, without water, shelter or food, except what he gathered in the forest. The poor animal was taken home on a sled, restored and became a valuable servant for years after. The above incident, we believe, surpasses all history of a horse's endurance,—exposed to the severities of a winter of hard frosts and deep snow in this high latitude. Cattle have rambled off many miles from their summer haunts and been found alive, by lumbermen, late in winter, but a horse never before, to my knowledge.

Lumbering, building mills, houses, clearing a little here and there, planting, sowing, fishing, mowing, were

calling for renewed effort. J. Houlton, Esq., built a flour mill on a stream near the north line of Houlton, and Mr. A. Putnam got his mill in operation, which accommodated the inhabitants of Houlton and the adjacent settlements. About this time, Mr. Samuel Morrison, with a numerous family of sons and daughters, removed from Limerick, to New Limerick, which joins Houlton on the west, from which, at the time of burning their felled trees, the smoke rose promiscuously, designating the places of their different locations, which, though distant, bore a social aspect, changing their solitary waste to cultivated farms. It were unnatural, ungrateful to dissociate those pioneers of this vast desert from a fraternal *co-partnership* in this common, indispensable, yea, noble work of converting the wilderness to fruitful fields, and of carrying civilization and competency to the gloomy abodes of poverty and ignorance, and associating the progress of morality, science and religion with the school-house, the seminary, and the temple for the worship of God. With the prosperity of these, is identified the perfectibility of our race, fulfilling our mission on earth, with a well-grounded hope of a blissful immortality beyond the grave.

There are two lakes, called the Limerick lakes, of about three miles in length, averaging half a mile in width. Upon the thoroughfare between the lakes there is a saw-mill, the property of Mr. Moses Drew, some nine miles from the village of Houlton, and a valuable quarry of limestone, where are two kilns, from which Houlton and the adjacent country are supplied with lime. The eastern lake is separated from the west branch of the Meduxnakeag by a swell of land, running nearly east and west, upon which those families settled, presenting a romantic view of the lake on the south, and the more remote settlement at the north. Those lakes afforded many pleasure excursions, sometimes on

rafts, in log canoes or skiffs, frequently combining pastime with fishing, which was found expedient in those days of *all work*.

There were valuable fish in those lakes, but the salmon of the creek were valued as the wealth of the waters. The mill-dams were beginning to obstruct their passage up, but they were so persevering to press their way over the falls and dams, that where there was no sluice or fish-ways made for them, they would run against the water-wheels while the mills were in operation, which would kill them instantly. While striving to ascend the falls, they are sometimes forced back against the rocks by the impetuosity of the dashing elements, as to wound them severely; for they have often been caught with the scars of bruises which they doubtless received from the rocks and ledges. When hunted, they evince a great sagacity on being wounded, trying every nook and hole to secrete themselves from their pursuers, but when deadly wounded by the spear, if they escape, the eels find them, as if by instinct, commencing at the wound, eating their way until they devour all but skin and bones. When sought by the spearmen, with their canoe and jack-light of bark or pitch-wood, with nets above and below those salmon holes, finding themselves in circumscribed limits, and tired from the chase, they will fall captives almost without resistance to their unrelenting foes. To escape the eye of the fish-hawk and eagle, they lie in deep water among the rocks, except at night or at high water, when they venture up the shoals and rapids. How marked is the hand of that universal Providence, thus to send the scaly treasures of the deep to force their way up the rivers and streams to supply the necessities of the remote and destitute creatures of His care; though hunted by their pursuers with nets and spears, on their passage up, yet the progress of those that escape is onward and upward; overcoming all ob-



stacles, until faithful to their progeny, they leave their spawn, after which they become poor and comparatively worthless, and return with the floating current to their oceanic retreat, beyond the reach of voracious man, there to be nourished and restored, but again, at the opening of the spring, when the rivers burst their ice-bound fetters, to perform their annual accustomed tour.

In 1817 Houlton was visited by speculators from Bangor, who came with goods, among whom were Wood & Bradbury, and sold boots, shoes, tea, tobacco, cotton cloth and some other articles to the inhabitants of Houlton, making ample profits, though the difficulty and expense attending transportation must have been considerable, as packs, carried on their backs, was the manner of conveyance.

Our infant colony, consisting of all ages, with the foreign settlers, began to extend the settlement, and among our social gatherings might be seen the gray locks that shaded the temples of more than four-score years, together with the middle-aged, and the peach down of infancy. The eldest among us was Mrs. Lydia Putnam, a distinguished female, one of the pioneers of two settlements, claiming a residence with the primitive inhabitants of New Salem.

An incident connected with her early life, we think is deserving of a place here. At a time, in absence of her husband, Bruin came in quest of game; finding naught but a swine in a pen a few steps from the door, made an assault upon the poor prisoner, which raised a bitter outcry at the salutation of his unwelcome guest. The young matron, hearing the alarm, from the impulse of the moment, seized her husband's gun, which not being charged, resorted to the next efficient weapon for aggressive warfare, the pitchfork, with which she made a threatening onset, until old Bruin, rising upon his hind feet, looked between his paws, with a horrid grin, as if



to stand the challenge of his armed assailant, but betwixt the squealing of the one, and the persistent advances and threats of the other, absconded, leaving his captive and his courageous adversary to claim the honor of triumph and be entertained with his own music. An alarm being given, the laborers left the field in pursuit, and after a chase of a mile or more in the woods, conquered him. But that fearless woman evinced the spirit of a heroine and a presence of mind peculiar to herself, which saved the poor captive from falling a prey to the voracity of his huge antagonist. Mrs. Lydia was the widow of Amos Putnam, Sr., of New Salem, and left there with her son Aaron, in 1805, and in 1809 removed from Woodstock to Houlton, as before mentioned. Varying from the chronology of events, we will here notice her decease, which occurred at the residence of her son-in-law, Joseph Houlton, Esq., April 8, 1820, after a short illness, peculiar to the decrepitude of four score and seven years. Mrs. Putnam was a member of the Congregational church in New Salem, from which it appears she never withdrew her connection. Possessing a character of industry, energy and perseverance, united with experience, qualified her for a sphere of usefulness peculiarly adapted to her situation, as doctress in Houlton and in the Province, there being no physician then above Fredericton, excepting Doctor Rice. She never refused when called upon to go the distance of five or ten miles, at whatever season of the year. Hers was emphatically a life of activity and usefulness, down to a good old age, and her death was lamented by numerous relatives and an extensive circle of friends and acquaintances.

From the efficient aid of the Rev. Mr. Harding, we were favored with the missionary labor of the Rev. Seth E. Winslow, of Barre, Mass., and as a testimony of the deep interest which those few families then evinced upon

the subject of their spiritual welfare, we will refer the reader to the following records :

At a meeting of the church, Sept. 20, 1818, Samuel Cook, having been propounded as candidate for a member of the First Congregational Church in Houlton Plantation, was received into the church in due form.

Baptized by Rev. Seth E. Winslow, Sept. 27, 1818 : — Elizabeth Ann and Samuel Dwight, children of Samuel and Betsy Rice ; Elizabeth Hanley, an adopted daughter of Samuel and Betsy Rice ; Aaron Randolph, son of Aaron and Isa Putnam ; Franklin and Harriet, children of Joshua and Betsey Putnam ; Harrison and Lyman, children of James and Sally Houlton ; James and Lydia, children of Samuel and Sally Cook ; Mary, Joseph and Fanny, children of Ebenezer and Polly Warner ; Priscilla Emerson, daughter of Samuel and Sally Wormwood ; Joseph Broadstreet, Samuel. Nathan, Thomas, Elizabeth and Jonathan, children of Samuel Parks and his wife, members of a Baptist Church.

At a meeting of the inhabitants of the Plantation of Houlton, Oct. 10, 1818, the First Congregational Church in said Houlton, with others present,

*Voted*, That they give the Rev. Seth E. Winslow an invitation to settle with them and labor among them in the gospel ministry.

*Voted*, That the sum of four hundred dollars be raised and paid to said Winslow annually, as his stated salary.

Nov. 1, 1818, Eleazer Packard, William Williams and Sarah Kendall were received in the usual form, as members of the First Congregational Church in Houlton Plantation. Baptized by the Rev. Seth E. Winslow : — Thomas Painter and Rhoda Caroline, children of Eleazer and Ruth Packard ; Ruth, Maria and Nathan Holden, children of Eleazer and Lucinda Packard.

In presence of the congregation. Mr. Amos Putnam was married to Miss Priscilla F. Wormwood.

It appears that the Rev. Mr. Winslow was faithful in the discharge of the duties of his mission, and that his efforts were duly appreciated by the church and inhabitants of Houlton, as the reader may learn from the subjoined letter of Deacon Samuel Kendall:

“HOULTON PLANTATION, Nov. 25, 1818.

*Rev. Alpheus Harding*—Dear Sir:—I am requested by the church of Christ and other inhabitants of the Plantation of Houlton, so called, to present through you, as being the proper organ of communication to the Massachusetts Evangelical Missionary Society, you being one of the executive committee of said society, and also the one by whom Mr. Winslow received his commission, their highest sense of the obligations they are under to said society, for their liberal donation, and happy choice in the missionary employed; and as a token of their grateful acknowledgment for the favor received by the friendly aid of said society, they have collected and committed to the charge of Mr. Winslow \$30, to be transmitted to said society, to be disposed of by them at their discretion, for the use of the gospel ministry.

They feel their inability to express their gratitude for the services of the missionary who came to them by the means of your benefaction, whose indefatigable labors of love among them for nearly three months past, by preaching the gospel, administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the truly kind, tender and affectionate manner of his instructing their children and youth, have excited in their breasts the warmest emotions of gratitude to him for the unwearied pains he hath taken with them. They deem it a privation to think of a separation, even until next summer. Should your society still think us objects of your further charity, (as we verily feel ourselves to be,) and could consistently render us that aid which would enable us,

with our own efforts, to sustain a pastor, we would indulge the hope that Mr. Winslow will be prevailed with to settle in the ministry in this place. He has given universal satisfaction, both in his private visits and public performances."

The writer, having no further records of ecclesiastical history until 1833, aside from the correspondence of Mr. Winslow and Rev. Mr. Harding with Deacon S. Kendall, in behalf of the church and inhabitants of the place, deems it a duty devolving upon him to copy extracts from those letters which are inseparably connected with this narrative, and will be read with interest by those who have witnessed the changes and vicissitudes of this little oasis of the desert.

From the correspondence of the Rev. Mr. Winslow with the church and people of Houlton, we take the following extracts :

STERLING, May 11, 1819.

*Dear Sir:*—You being deacon of the little flock of Christ, and as a father among the people of Houlton Plantation, I would address this letter to you, and through you to all those to whom I lately ministered, and for whom I shall ever entertain a firm friendship and affectionate remembrance. I need not recount the kindness and attention I received while among you, and from those who accompanied me homeward, which endeared you all to my heart; nor need I advert to what was still more encouraging, the reception of the word I preached among you—the joining of some to the body of Christ, and, as I trust, a spiritual union of others to him. Suffice it for me to say, that you were the object of my desire, and if it had been, and should appear to be my duty, I would live and die in your service. \* \* Nevertheless, there are many reasons which will offer themselves to your consideration; such as the disadvan-

tages of education—the want of ministerial aid and intercourse, &c., which strengthen my conviction that it is not my duty to accept your offer made. Having deliberately examined the subject, and consulted judicious friends, who are in the ministry; moved by strong feelings in your interests, I have prayerfully submitted the case to God, for His direction, and find myself at last constrained to say, however unwelcome it may be to the people of Houlton, that it is my duty to remain where I am. \* \* but that in due time God will send to your relief, one who shall be adapted to the station, and become a father in Christ to the children and youth, and a guide and instructor to all in spiritual and divine things. \* \*

In 1819, Mr. Joseph Jones, formerly of Falmouth, Me., removed from the Province of New Brunswick to Houlton, with a numerous family, who married and settled in Houlton and vicinity. This family were remarkable for their taste and talent for music, both vocal and instrumental, and when together constituted a choir of themselves.

But Death, that insatiate archer, with his quiver of arrows, has laid them low, one by one, until their choir on earth is broken, and several of their places are made vacant.

The inhabitants of Houlton were disappointed when the Rev. Mr. Winslow declined accepting their invitation to settle among them as their pastor, as the reader may infer from the foregoing extracts.

During Mr. Winslow's mission, the inhabitants met for worship in a hall, in the dwelling-house of J. Houlton, Esq., which was spacious enough to convene the people of Houlton and our neighbors in the Province who united with us. This was an appropriate time, as it was esteemed to be, for devout praise and thanksgiving, and one long to be cherished among the most pleasing and profitable retrospections of that little flock, who had

formerly enjoyed the blessings of the preached gospel under the pious instruction of our venerable friend, the Rev. Alpheus Harding, who ever evinced a deep and lively interest, both for the temporal and spiritual welfare of this branch of his former church and congregation.

After Mr. Winslow left, agreeable to his request, the inhabitants did not forsake assembling together on the Sabbath, for the social worship of Him who vouchsafes to bestow His spirit in answer to the fervent prayer of his faithful, believing followers; irrespective of place or circumstances, either in the lowly cottage, the retired closet, or the solitary desert. His worshippers are not confined to Jerusalem to pay their homage, nor their devotions alone—

In the gorgeous walls of the cathedral,  
Beneath the vaulted arch and towering spire,  
Where the organ's pealing notes in concert swell,  
To chant the songs of praise with vocal choir.

As there were no records at that time, except the before-mentioned correspondence, we are happy to find the following letter among others preserved as a precious memorial of the past:

NEW SALEM, May 9, 1820.

*My Dear Sir:*—In behalf of the brethren of the church of Christ, in this town, I have a few things to communicate to the church of Christ in Houlton Plantation: and as you were long a member and officer of this church, and probably the oldest member there, I have thought to make you the organ of communication.

We heard that the church in Houlton Plantation was destitute of furniture suitable for the communion table: and as we are about to make some addition to the furniture we now have, the brethren have thought fit to make a present of a part of the service now belonging to this church. We shall send by the bearer, Mr. Amos



Putnam, two of the tankards which you used in commemorating the sufferings and death of our dear Redeemer, in this place. We give those as a pledge that we are still mindful of you, though far separated from us, and though they are of but little pecuniary value, yet being the vessels we have so often used on that solemn occasion, (and I trust I may add, in the unity of the spirit, and in the bond of peace, mutually loving one another, and desirous of one another's spiritual good,) we trust you will receive them as the strong pledge of our continued love, and as one of the strongest tokens of our earnest desire for your growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Those vessels, when you use them, and as often as you see them, will call to your remembrance former days; and we pray the time may not be far distant, when you may again use them in the solemn service of the Lord, with all that mutual affection which the members of the same body ought to exercise towards one another, and with that sincere love of the brethren which the Apostle tells us, is the strongest of love to God. \* \* \*

Brethren and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God is, that you may be blessed in your temporal and spiritual concerns,—that you may live in love and peace, and that the God of love and peace may be with you.

With these sentiments and feelings, I subscribe myself  
your servant in the Lord,

ALPHEUS HARDING.

The above extract needs no comment, as a true portraiture of the feelings and desires which were entertained and cherished by the Rev. Mr. Harding, and the members of the church in New Salem towards the scattered sheep, who were, and had been for years, in the wilderness without a shepherd.

Mr. Amos Putnam, of New Salem, was accompanied by Messrs. Amos and Abraham Pearce, sons of Varney



Pearce, Esq., of New Salem, who, for many years represented that town in the Legislature of Mass., and was one of the most useful and influential citizens in that town, and was highly esteemed for his public services and private character, as a gentleman of strict integrity and moral worth. Those brothers, possessing a proprietary share in the half township, settled under favorable circumstances, and made valuable improvements.

Feb. 7, 1821, a society was organized by the name of Instructive Companies, the object of which was moral and literary improvement. The members were as follows: Samuel Kendall, Jr., Romaine L. Putnam, Joshua G. Kendall, Edwin Townsend, Edmund Coan, Stern Putnam, Jacob Harward, and Joseph Kendall. They were constitutionally bound to meet every Thursday evening from September to March. During the summer they were to meet the last Thursday in each month. This might be considered as a small beginning, nevertheless there was an apparent improvement in the several compositions of the members during the operation of the society; but soon our President removed to Woodstock, where he rendered himself useful as a teacher, and this society lost its organization. The crowding cares and duties inseparably connected with our laborious situation soon proved that our life did not consist in the rhyme and measure of poetry. Falling trees, chopping the logs and piling them together, burning and clearing off the brands, was no mere fancy work for delicate hands and frilled bosoms; still the farmer, perhaps, realizes as much satisfaction and enjoyment as the literary and professional classes of men whose cares and duties are usually augmented by their increased responsibilities, if conscientious in the discharge of their obligations, while the husbandman engages in his vocation, preparing the prolific soil, in the opening spring sowing the variety of seed, planting fruit trees, cultivating the garden,

uniting the esculent with the ornamental, looking forward, anticipating an ample remuneration for his labor; daily witnessing the progress of vegetation, from the tender blade to the ear, then the full eorn and ripe fruit; and then comes the autumnal gathering.

“Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,  
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;  
How jocund did they drive their team afield,  
How bowed the wood beneath their sturdy stroke.

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;  
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,  
The short and simple annals of the poor.”

The writer, conforming to dates, in chronological order, must submit to many abrupt transitions, from the moral, sentimental and religious, to secular occurrences of business life.

In the summer, Ebenezer Warner built a mill-dam and saw-mill near his residence at the falls of the south branch of the creek, it being a valuable privilege, two miles above A. Putnam's mill, at the village.

In 1821, Mr. Timothy Frisbie, formerly from Fryeburg, Me., removed to Houlton from the Province of N. B., where he was, by death, bereaved of an affectionate companion, leaving a husband and family of sons and daughters to mourn their irreparable loss. The family of Mr. Frisbie now constitute a portion of the most influential and enterprising inhabitants of Houlton and vicinity where they are settled.

In July Mr. Holman Cary, Thomas Shaw and Haskell Cary left New Salem for Houlton, to visit their friends and see the country.

In 1822, Deacon James Russell and family removed from Bloomfield to Houlton, where they resided a short time, then removed to Monticello, but soon after returned to Houlton, where they remained until the decease of Deacon Russell, whom we shall have occasion to mention more particularly hereafter.

The inhabitants of Houlton, still soliciting missionary aid, the Rev. Mr. Harding replies in answer to their communication, as follows :

NEW SALEM, Feb. 16, 1822.

Your letter, dated Dec. 29, past, favored by Esquire Houlton, I have received, and read with much interest. I am very sensible, dear sir, of the unpleasant situation in which you are placed, in regard to Christian privileges and ordinances; and have no doubt your situation will meet the sympathy of the Evangelical Missionary Society. Agreeably to the request of the inhabitants, expressed by you, as their agent, I will present your situation before the executive committee of that society.

\* \* I do not know the exact state of the funds at the present time, nor whether they will be able to send a missionary the present year. If they should, I will exert my influence to have one who shall not only have the common qualifications of a missionary in a teacher of religion, but one who may be peculiarly qualified for your particular situation; one who will seek for the promotion and prosperity of the people, in a temporal as well as spiritual view. What you intimate in your letter about my visiting you, has been a subject of conversation between Esquire Pearce, Col. Putnam and myself, before receiving your letter, and we had come to the conclusion to visit your plantation in company, when a road should be made passable from Bangor there. But, dear sir, you are sensible that such an agreement could not have been made without some preliminary conditions. These conditions were so numerous that I hardly dare promise myself the pleasure of such a visit. The principal conditions on my part were, the health of my family and the situation of the parish. \* \* \* Should health be restored in my family, or so far restored that duty would not demand my particular attention at home, and the circumstances of the parish be such as in the

view of judicious members of the church and society would warrant an absence of three or four months, I shall fulfil my engagements with Esquire Pearce and Colonel Putnam, and with them visit you in the course of a year or two, or as soon as a road shall be passable from Bangor to Houlton Plantation. \* \* \*

I remain, as always, your constant friend and devoted servant in our common Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

ALPHEUS HARDING.

*Dea. Samuel Kendall.*

We presume our estimable friend did not then anticipate seeing the day when he could take a passage on the rail car from Bangor to Oldtown, thence up the river, nearly half the distance to Houlton, on board the steamboat; or of a railroad so far in progress, on the same route; nor when the people of this county would be looking to the time not far distant, when the iron horse, with his shrill neigh, warning his approach, would come laden to exchange commodities for the products of Aroostook. We rejoice that Maine is not without her distinguished sons, who possess policy, forecast and acumen, whose influence and talents are arrayed with the wisdom and experience of successful advocates upon the subject of this noble enterprise, and we hope, ere long, Maine will prove her efficiency, by engaging more fully in this contemplated gigantic work of philanthropy, which will open an avenue to north-eastern Maine for the encouragement and signal benefit of an increasing population, of a hardy, stalwart yeomanry, possessing industry, enterprise and intelligence, who will develop the resources of this extensive domain, converting the forest to "fruitful fields," when the hills and valleys shall echo with the bleating of flocks and lowing of herds. Such a people may be denominated the bone and sinew of a nation—yea, constitute the safeguard and stability of a republic.

We congratulate our British neighbors in the prospect, ere long, of the completion of the St. Andrews railroad, up to the latitude of Woodstock and Houlton, and in longitude nearly equi-distant between the two places.

In March, 1822, Moses White, Esq., and Jason Cummings, being apprised of the exorbitant prices of various articles of trade at Houlton and in the Province, left Bangor with a load of goods, which they conveyed with a horse-team upon the ice up the Penobscot and Mattawamkeag rivers, from thence they hauled them on *toboggans*, as the Indians call them, a sort of sled with one runner, made of birch-bark, a foot or eighteen inches wide, and about six feet long. Finding their fireworks damp, their only alternative was to camp without fire, which must have been rather a cool berth for them at that season, and though they removed the snow with a shovel, for a place to lie, yet they were without shelter, save the woods, with each a blanket in which to envelop himself, they lay themselves down upon their bed of boughs, if not to the embrace of *somnus* and delectable dreams, at least with the forlorn prospect of suffering endurance till morning, which must have been *admirably* verified. After breakfasting upon their frozen fare and cold beverage, they traveled through to Houlton, where they sold their goods at advanced prices for fur, which was then an object of speculation.

There having been grants of townships in this new section of country, to several institutions, the attention of capitalists was attracted eastward, with a view of speculating in wild lands. But with some it proved an unfortunate enterprise. Nathaniel Ingersoll, Esq., of New Gloucester, having an interest in Williams College Grant to the amount of \$6500, and in Westford Academy Grant of \$3500, frequently visited Houlton, with a view ultimately, of an advantageous sale, which, at the time of his purchase, might have been considered, at least, a

safe investment. But the tide of emigration continued westward, and those lands remained in their primeval state, notwithstanding all the inducements which could reasonably be offered to settlers by proprietors at that time, consequently this venerable gentleman sacrificed \$8,000 of \$10,000 invested in those two grants.

Doctor Samuel Rice, after a residence of twelve years at Houlton, having been our physician, and improved from a forest state a valuable farm, with good buildings, removed to Woodstock, where his practice was greatly increased, but much to the inconvenience of the people of Houlton and vicinity. The absence of himself and family made a great void in our society. They were highly esteemed, and by his removal the inhabitants sustained the loss of a valuable physician, citizen and friend. Prior to his removal from New Salem, he was the most popular physician of that town, and during his residence at Houlton he had an extensive practice—receiving frequent calls from the Province, of from ten to fifty miles distant, with which he complied at all seasons, however inclement the weather, or unfavorable the circumstances, and was conscientious in his charges.

During the summer Messrs. James and Peleg Lander, sons of Thomas Lander, of Fairfield, came to Houlton, where they became residents.

In the winter, Messrs. Wadleigh, Ayer and Stinson came from Bangor with several loads of goods, hauled by horses harnessed one before the other, following the Penobscot, Mattawamkeag, and Baskahegan upon the ice, from thence making the shortest transit to Houlton, that being the *depot* for those *forest* merchants. Their goods being subject to high duties, the people from the Province came there for various articles.

At that time Houlton began to bear the appearance of a sort of miniature *forest market*. Those speculators increased their stock, as well they might, where goods



sold at such exorbitant prices. The reader must either suppose that money was very plenty, or of but little value, or that thick, cowhide boots were a scarce article, to command the California price of nine dollars a pair, which has been paid for those brought to Houlton. No wonder that young men of enterprise, engaged in the transportation of goods through the woods, as it was called, from Bangor to Houlton, even though they had to travel on the ice of those serpentine streams, driving their horses tandem upon a zigzag path for many miles in the woods to their place of destination, for their tavern bills for entertainment, at that time, from Bangor to Houlton, must have been rather small.

They, o'er the ice bound, fettered streams,  
Pursued their journey, long and cold;  
While sparkling snow in sunlight gleamed,  
Their treasures in the forest sold.

The long winter evenings were occupied by the youth in the social and improving study and practice of vocal music, who were instructed by Mr. Putnam Shaw, who also taught day school in the usual branches, in both of which he received a liberal patronage.

In the spring of 1823, Mr. Holman Cary and family removed from New Salem to Houlton, and were greeted with a cordial welcome by their former acquaintances and friends, as an acquisition to our little circle, which had drawn on the old Bay State, principally for what they then were. In the autumn, James and Peleg Lander, having purchased the mill of Aaron Putnam which was built in 1810, removed it and erected a new saw mill upon the same site, which proved valuable property,—pine timber being abundant, and commanding a high price at the principal markets. Mr. Joseph Stevens and family removed from Fredericton, N. B., to Houlton, where they resided. Mr. Stevens was esteemed as an active, useful artisan.

In October, 1824, Moses White, Esq., left Houlton for Winthrop, accompanied to Bangor by Amos Putnam, Jacob Haskell and Joseph Kendall, who were bound for New Salem, their native place. On our arrival there, we could but exclaim, "What a change even ten years have made in that place!" The youth had grown up; many had removed, and others died; but there stood the old meeting-house, with its "church-going bell," which had so long marked the time for gathering the worshipping assembly, who softly trod the "long drawn aisle" to their respective pews, with button doors and seats which, with hinges, rise and fall; the spacious gallery, with its new choir, whose voices resounding "praise divine,"—and more than all, the pulpit, with its former occupant, whose familiar voice was melody to the ears of his long absent auditors, from whose lips they early received wise and judicious instruction and admonition, which are ineffaceably impressed upon our memories, as are his venerable form and features. There, in the cemetery, stands the monuments of the departed, with the moss-grown epitaphs over the graves of our revered ancestors, which remind us of the destiny of all succeeding generations. A few rods distant stands the house of our birth-place, where the light first dawned upon our "infant vision." The garden, too, with its stone-wall enclosure, and its choice fruit trees, which through our chamber windows used to cast their shadows in the radiance of the morning sun-beams,—these were not all there; the corrodings of time had lessened their number and marred their beauty, and the tall pear tree, divested of its verdure and robbed of its golden treasure, stood near, and the orchard at the north, which produced its variety of specific fruit, where, for the celebration of the anniversary of our Nation's birthday, the people assembled beneath its shade, seated around the long spread table, loaded with delicious viands. At

the head were the clergyman and the Hon. Samuel C. Allen, who announced the patriotic toasts which were signalized by the repeated roar of the old cannon. But the ruthless hand of Time seems to suggest to us the interrogatory of where are now those guests who met on that joyful festival,—that devoted band of patriots and philanthropists, whose bosoms then glowed with love to God and man? How few there are left whose mortal remains have not long slept in the narrow house, but whose spirits have flown to their ultimate reward.

“ Can storied urn or animated bust  
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?  
Can honor’s voice provoke the silent dust,  
Or flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in that neglected spot is laid  
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;  
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,  
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.”

The grave, that cannibal of flesh, has gorged its millions, yet wiser, if not better, each succeeding generation grows, and onward is the motto of the present age; and what will not yet be achieved, since, by the blessing of God, success has crowned the efforts made in the construction of the Atlantic telegraph. Who can now name an object of so vast magnitude and practical bearing upon the family of mankind, that would require the united skill, art, science and indomitable perseverance of two natives, or even the world? Canals, railroads, team-bridges and telescopes have been brought to an astonished perfectability, and, to cap the climax, lightning has come, as Heaven’s vicegerent, tracing the submarine cable, annihilating time and distance, as if to aid in the mighty reform when a nation shall be born in a day! Who, then, shall doubt the fulfilment, and, ere long, of the prophecy of Isaiah, in its spiritual sense, “when the wolf also, shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the

calf and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Who will not then join in the universal anthem of "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men."

In February, 1824, Messrs. Zebulon and Nathaniel, sons of Nathaniel Ingersoll, Senior, of New Gloucester, of whom mention has been made, left Bangor in company with James Babcock, with five or six hundred dollars worth of goods, destined for Houlton. They came on the ice of the Penobscot, Mattawamkeag and Baskahegan rivers, thence following a newly cut road for horses and sleighs to pass. On this route is a horseback, as it is called, upon which the road passes four or five miles, running nearly north and south, crossing an extensive bog of two or three miles in width, which lies about sixteen miles south from Houlton. This horseback is, what some would style, one of nature's accidental developments—a mere production of blind chance, void of design or plan; but we would rather ascribe the construction of that turnpike (just wide enough for teams to pass, without falling down a declivity of twenty-five or thirty feet into a marsh which forms a striking contrast to that formidable highway,) to the universal Architect, by whom it appears to have been made to facilitate transportation for man, the lord of His creation and creature of His care. We are informed that this horseback, with but little interruption, excepting where the diverging streams are wont to pass, extends in a northerly direction through Amity, No. 11,

Hodgdon, Houlton, and continues on the same course to an indefinite distance, assuming, as it does, in many places, a more formidable ridge than above described, until it becomes lost in the swells of Aroostook. These traders having arrived at Houlton, Mr. Z. Ingersoll remained in the vicinity and engaged in the lumber business in company with Messrs. Joseph and Henry Houlton, in the valley of the Aroostook, in which enterprise they were successful. Mr. Ingersoll, for many years, was rather a transient inhabitant of Houlton; and still he might, with propriety, be styled such, although himself and family have long been residents of the place; yet he is a land-holder in Iowa, which calls his attention there more or less annually.

Mr. Stephen Pullen, a native of Waterville, a man of industry and enterprise, removed from New Brunswick to Houlton and purchased the farm of Doctor S. Rice, for which he paid \$1400.

During the summer Rev. Mr. Howden, a Scotch Presbyterian from the Province, visited Houlton with his family, where he preached several Sabbaths, with whom the inhabitants were pleased, and made an effort to build him a house, with a view of enjoying his ministerial labors as their settled pastor. But on a more mature deliberation of the subject—considering the limited resources of the church and people, and the requirements necessary for their support, the anticipated relation was relinquished.

In the autumn Mr. Shepard Cary arrived at Houlton from New Salem, his native place.

Messrs. Palmer & Cowen, from Kennebec, with a numerous herd of cattle and horses, came through to Houlton. Soon after Mr. John Basford, Deputy Sheriff from Augusta, accompanied by Messrs. Black and Rollins, arrived with twelve horses and goods to a considerable amount, which were principally sold in the Province.

Mr. Basford attached a part of the stock driven by said Palmer and Cowen, by virtue of a precept from Augusta. Mr. Basford has since remained, an active and useful resident of Houlton.

About this time Messrs. Kimball & Stinson came, also, with horses and goods. Horses, oxen, and commodities of all kinds even to the equipage of sleighs, harnesses, &c., were disposed of without sacrifice. Three young men, viz.: Steward, Hutchinson and Colboth, shoemakers, came to Houlton from Kennebec, and worked at their trade in a small building on the bank of the creek. Mr. James Gould, a native of Berwick, blacksmith, removed to Houlton, where he commenced business, and succeeded as a skillful workman.

In the summer of 1825, Messrs. White, Cummings, Eastern and Babcock left Bangor with eight horses and several bateaux loaded with goods, destined for Houlton, following their accustomed route. We believe that this was the first effort made to convey goods of any considerable amount, by water craft to this part of the country. Leaving their bateaux at Baskahegan they transported the loads on horses a distance of about twenty miles to the transient home of those traders. About this time Daniel Bracket, a native, (we believe), of Limerick, came to Houlton and worked with Mr. Gould at the anvil.

John Matherson, a native of Scotland, removed from the Province to Houlton. Mr. Matherson informed the writer that he raised from his first clearing of five acres, 200 bushels of wheat; ten do. of corn; 100 do. of potatoes; 25 do. of turnips, and a cart-load of pumpkins, which, estimated at the prices for which those articles of produce then sold, would amount to about \$472.

October 7, 1825, was signalized by a fire, which prevailed in this region of country and in the Province of New Brunswick, Miramichi appeared the most distin-



guished for its dreadful ravages, hence, it derived the appellation of the "Miramichi fire."

The wind, like Sirocco, for days had blown,  
And night's sable mantle o'er earth was thrown ;  
While the fire appeared from heaven to come down,  
On woodland and plain, on hamlet and town.

While darkness profound pervaded the night ;  
The contrast dire, made more vivid the light,  
Like the flash of cannon and the sheen of war,  
Which rendered more frightful the midnight hour.

So great was the destruction of that place, that hundreds of the inhabitants perished. The writer was informed by Mr. Newman, a native of Miramichi, but a resident of Houlton, who witnessed that tragical scene, that the village of Newcastle, and Douglassstown, three miles below, were both consumed. The fire came upon them so suddenly that they could make no preparation,—surprising them, as it did, in the night, the people were obliged to flee from their houses, for refuge, to caves and wells,—children were crying for their parents, and parents, frantic with grief and despair, for their children. The animals instinctively run for the rivers and streams. There were instances, we were informed, where the lives of individuals were preserved by holding on to them while swimming. The waters did not "become blood," but were so impregnated with smoke and ashes, as to kill the fish—the salmon died in their native element. The scene, to the inhabitants of Miramichi, who, at that time, were an amalgamation of different nations, must have been not unlike that which was foretold of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the day of judgment, in the 25th chapter of Mathew, "neither let him that is in the field return back to take his clothes," &c. Many who fled to the river were drowned, among whom a family, (husband, wife and children,) while endeavoring to cross the river in a canoe, from Douglass to Chatham, a distance of about two miles, were overwhelmed by the waves and all lost.

Those in the forest that were remote from the river and streams, and had nowhere to flee for refuge, fell victims to the raging element. From a party of seven men engaged lumbering, only one escaped to relate the intelligence of the sad fate of his companions; and his life was saved by literally burying himself in mud. These instances of mortality were no isolated cases, but we mention them as giving a general idea of the condition of those who perished during that storm of wind and fire.

The people being left houseless, many became objects of public charity, for the town was totally destroyed; but they soon were relieved by the proffered aid, in clothing, provisions, &c., which were brought in ship-loads from England and the States. The drouth proceeding this, was so extreme, having had no rain, but heavy dews, for three months in that vicinity, the streams and springs that were never known to be dry, furnished no water; the fire extended through the wilderness in the low lands, where there was much turf, and burnt the trees down by the roots, leaving the forest, in many places, in a state of ruin worse than that of a tornado.

The wilderness of the Miramichi country consisted very much of pine, and for many years had been the theatre of lumber operations which, in a measure, accounts for the more dreadful destruction in that region, both for man and beast. In places the green pine groves were entirely consumed, leaving the ground a barren waste. There were the fallen leaves, dry as tinder, and other combustibles common to the forest—the wind, which always accompanies a conflagration—the fire catching in the bark and moss of trees, flaming to their tops, scattering broad-cast the flying leaves and cinders;—no wonder that the fire had the appearance of descending from heaven, amid the atmosphere of smoke. Neither

is it so much a subject of astonishment, that some even thought that the time of the final judgment had commenced, as that Millerism should so far have fanaticized the people, as to have furnished so many subjects for the Insane hospital. It must have been a time of terror and dismay to the most daring and intrepid.

What rendered the fire more extraordinary was, that on the 7th of October it prevailed simultaneously in the various sections of Maine, as well as in the Province of New Brunswick. On that day a large portion of Fredericton was burned, while the fire was spreading at the Oromucto, and at the same time the inhabitants of Houlton and the adjacent county were suffering more or less from its ravages, especially by the damage done to their woodlands and maple orchards. The valuable timber-lands in the Penobscot region was a scene of conflagration, which not only consumed a vast amount of pine timber, but ruined the soil, and at the same time was doing its work of destruction at the Piscataquis. For weeks the atmosphere exhibited the dense body of smoke, which obscured the sun as, at times, to produce the darkness of twilight, at noon-day. All eyes were suffused with tears from the sable cloud which pervaded the country, and the poor animals were swollen almost to suffocation.

This, at that time, must have had more the appearance of a visitation of the displeasure of the Almighty, than anything of modern history which had transpired; and that he would presume to isolate the people of Miramichi as the lone subjects of providential discipline—no; far be it from us to pass judgment upon any; but we have been informed that Miramichi had become notorious as a lumber depot, and a rendezvous for the profligate, licentious and profane, and that gambling, debauchery, and desecration of the Sabbath there prevailed; we have thought it possible that this severe chastisement

was signally directed by Him who does not willingly afflict His creatures, but to call us to a sense of our accountability to our rightful Sovereign.

But the discussion of this subject may appear foreign to our purpose, and we will not dwell upon the merits or demerits of this extraordinary occurrence.

Perhaps the writer may be considered too general and prolix in the description of this fire, as Houlton was not the theatre of its triumph; but we feel that the extent and universality of this singular event, may atone for our having so far departed from the limits of our legitimate sphere.

We have acquainted our readers with the incidents connected with the settlement of this town, and in drawing to a close it seems necessary to state that with the exception of one person, Lysander Putnam, all of the early settlers have gone to their long home. The following is partly a repetition of what has already been stated, but being in a condensed form will be very valuable to preserve:

Houlton is the shire town of Aroostook County, is situated on the eastern border of Maine, and is 250 miles from Portland, via the old "Military Road" from Bangor. The Houlton Branch of the N. B. & C. Railway was completed in 1870. From here start the stage-routes to Presque Isle, Caribou, Fort Fairfield, Linneus, Danforth and Patten, in Maine, and Woodstock, in New Brunswick.

The town is bounded on the north by Littleton, south by Hodgdon, west by New Limerick, and east by Richmond, in New Brunswick. In the northwestern part of the town are two large "Horse-backs;" but the surface generally lies in large swells. The soil is a deep, rich loam, underlaid by clay and yielding abundantly of the usual farm crops. The Meduxnekeag river, a branch of the Saint John, flows from southwest to northeast through

the midst of the town. Bog, Moose, and Cook Brooks, tributaries of the Meduxnekeag, are the other principal streams. The powers on the river are known as the Cary, Page & Madigan, Ham, Logan, Mansur, Cressey and Houlton water powers. The manufacturing is chiefly on the Cary power in the southwestern part of the town, and on the Cressey and Houlton powers, in this village. There are two cheese factories, two starch factories, a woolen mill, three lumber mills, three flour mills, one tannery, one iron foundry and machine shop, two printing offices, sash, blind and door factory.

Other manufactures are bark extract, harnesses, boots and shoes, carriages, marble-work, etc. Houlton also contains express and telegraph offices, custom house, photographer's saloon, one book-bindery, five hotels, three livery stables, three tailoring establishments, three drug stores, two insurance agencies, one savings bank and one national bank, four saloons, one bakery, two barber-shops, two public halls, six churches, forty-eight stores, one bowling-alley, two billiard rooms and one skating rink. Our fire department consists of one steamer, hand-tub, hook-and-ladder truck, and a chemical engine. This town is also blessed (?) with eight doctors, eighteen lawyers, and two dentists.

Houlton is the center of trade for the county, and is a busy and thrifty town. The village has many handsome residences, and there are several well-shaded and very attractive streets. The Houlton Savings Bank, in May, 1881, held \$60,000 in deposits, from its 500 depositors.

There are two weekly newspapers published in the village, the "Aroostook Pioneer" and the "Aroostook Times." The "Pioneer," the first newspaper in the county, was established in Presque Isle, Dec. 1857, by W. S. Gilman, and was moved to Houlton in 1868. The "Times" was established in 1860, by Theodore Cary.

The Houlton Academy has done noble service in the cause of education. Many who have already gone out from its walls have achieved distinction in their callings, and there is every reason to hope that its future work will surpass that of its earlier period. The building is a good one and occupies ample grounds.

In 1868 a telegraph line was stretched from Woodstock, N. B. to Houlton, through the efforts of W. S. Gilman.

In 1830, a military station was established here by the national government, but the troops were removed in 1847, during the war with Mexico. The barracks occupied a position on the outskirts of the village near the railway station, and have long since fallen to decay. The Aroostook County meridian line is established on the eastern side of the parade ground. A soldiers' cemetery is near by.

The county court-house and jail occupy a central position in the village. Houlton has nine public school-houses; and the entire public school property in land and buildings is valued at \$7000. The valuation of estates in 1870 was \$681,646. In 1880 it was \$725,469. The population in 1870 was 2,850. In 1880 it was 3,228.



## APPENDIX.

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The following copies of old documents relating to the early history of Houlton, were kindly furnished us by J. F. Pratt. M. D., of Chelsea, Mass. They are petitions to the great and general court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, for the incorporation of the Plantation into a town :

To the Honbl. Senate and House of Representatives in General Court Assembled at Boston, Jan. 1810 : The Petition of the Subscribers Humbly Shewith : That your Petitioners are situated very remote from any Incorporated Towns within this Commonwealth (at least one hundred miles), which makes it very necessary that we should be Incorporated into a Town. Our Infant Settlement we hope and expect will rapidly increase provided we can have some small Indulgence of Government. The Inconveniences which we labor under in our present situation must most clearly be seen by your Honors, but we beg leave to state few particulars. In the first place we beg leave to observe that we were from a country where we were always accustomed to have regular Preaching & Schools regularly established ; which we can never have established here in our Unincorporated State. Nor can we open Roads to any advantage, either to accomodate ourselves or the Publick, and we beg leave further to observe that many things which are matter of Record which happens in any Settlement, such as marriages, intentions of marriage, Berths, Deaths &c.,

all required by law to be recorded. We are sensible that we have the privilidge of going to the next Incorporated Town, but when your Honors turn your attention for a moment to our local situation, being one hundred and Ten from any Incorporated Town & that thro a Wilderness without Road our advantage dwindles into nothing. We therefore Pray your Honors that we may be Incorporated by the following bounds vis. Begining on the Boundary line of the United States at the South East Corner of a Tract of Land granted to New Salem Academy and thence West  $13^{\circ}$  North six miles, to the Southwesterly corner of said Grant, thence North  $13^{\circ}$  East Three miles, Thence East  $13^{\circ}$  South six miles to the North East Corner of said Grant on the Boundary line, thence on the Boundary line to the first bounds, with all the privilidges that other Towns within this commonwealth Injoy, to be Incorporated by the name of *Houlton*. We are sensible that it is the usual custom to require an "Order of Notice" before an act of Incorporation is passed, but when our situation is taken into view that our being Incorporated or not being Incorporated, concerns none but ourselves, we hope the usual custom of Notifcation will be dispensed with and an Act of Incorporation Granted. And fully relying on your goodness we as in duty bound shall ever pray.

Plantation of *Holton*, Sept. 5th 1809.

(Signed)

Joseph Houlton, Samuel Cook, James Houlton, John Allen, Joseph Goodnough, Samuel Houlton, Benjamin Marshall.

The following in another hand writing is at bottom of Petition — "4 famalies Aaron Putnam moved since the Petition was drawn."

In Senate, Jan. 26, 1810. Read and committed to the

standing committee on Incorporation of Towns and to consider and report.

Sent down for concurrence,

N. G. OTIS, Prest.

In House of Reps. Jan. 27, 1810.

Read and concurred.

TIMOTHY BIGELOW, Speaker.

The committee of both houses appointed to consider application for the Incorporation of Towns, Districts, etc. On the Petition of Jesse Houlton & others praying to be Incorporated in a Town, Ask leave to Report that the Petitioners have leave to Withdraw, which is submitted.

SALEM TOWN, per order.

In Senate, Feb. 20, 1810. Read and accepted.

Sent down for concurrence.

N. G. OTIS, Prest.

In the House of Reps. Feb. 21, 1810.

Read and concurred.

TIMOTHY BIGELOW, Speaker.

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To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court Assembled. The subscribers hereby respectfully represent that they are inhabitants of a certain tract of land, given by the Legislature to the trustees of New Salem Academy and situated in the North District of the County of Washington. That they are at the distance of nearly one hundred miles from any Incorporated Town in the District aforesaid; that they also labor under many and great inconveniency from the want of

authority to raise monies for making and repairing highways & bridges within this Plantation, for supporting a school for the instruction of their children & youth and for maintaining the ministry among them, as far as their numbers & correspondent ability may admit, the importance of which will be duly appreciated by the Legislature. These with many other considerations induce us to solicit the Legislature to grant us an act Incorporating the Plantation of Houlton so called together with the Half Township Granted to Groton Academy, which is bounded & described as by the Plan thereof in the Land office as will appear into a Town by the name of *Houlton* with all the powers & privileges possessed by other Incorporated Town in the commonwealth and as in duty bound will ever Pray.

[Signed]

SAMUEL KENDALL,  
JOSEPH HOULTON,  
AARON PUTNAM,  
JOSEPH KENDALL,  
JOSEPH GOODMAN,  
JAMES HOULTON,  
WILLIAM WILKINS,  
SAMUEL COOK,  
AMOS PUTNAM.

EDMUND CONE,  
EBEN WARNER,  
JOSHUA G. KENDALL,  
MICHAEL O'BRIAN,  
SAMUEL HOULTON,  
JAMES U. TAYLOR,  
EDWARD TOWNSEND,  
SAMUEL RICE,

Oct. 30, 1818.









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